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ABSTRACT

Problems facing Brazilian universities are rooted in a problem of goals, the disintegration of the community of scholars, and growth and bureaucratization. Different goals of the university that need to be conciliated are the roles of teaching and research, or helping the young become men and conducting scientific and technological investigations capable of assuring the autonomy of Brazilian industrial expansion. In Brazilian universities it is difficult to exchange professors with foreign institutions, acquire and subscribe to books and journals, and hire and transfer professors. The growing diversity of the fields of knowledge has led to departmentalization and specialization with the consequence of isolating professors. Students cannot limit themselves exclusively to studying and exchanging ideas because of sociceconomic conditions. The university department is the operational unit responsible for teaching, research, and extension of all fields of knowledge and should coordinate and integrate these functions. Coordination is the principle problem of an organization. An administrative body should be based upon the departments; administrators should be trained at the department level and rise to higher levels with a sensitivity to the problems of the smaller departmental unit. The university should characterize itself as an integrated functional unit where everyone has specific and interdependent functions. The organizational theory of Mary Parker Follett is discussed. (SW)

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GUIDELINES FOR A NEW MODEL OF UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION

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I THE PROBLEMS OF THE UNIVERSITY

It is widely known, especially in western societies, that problems affect the university nowdays. Although the question is very complex, involving social, economic, political, and other factors, we can distinguish at the roots of the crisis the following basic factors:

1) the problem of ends;

2) the disintegration of the community of scholars; and

3) growth and burocratization.

1. The Problem of Ends:

> ...if it were the German philosophers who, more so than anyone else in the world, reflected upon the university and wrote about die idee der universitat, nowhere else did the university encompass only this idea. Everywhere the university was constricted, by industrial development, by becoming an institution of the masses, by democratization, by the demands of higher and middle educational cycles, by the demand for permanent education for all citizens, to overcome the restricted field defined by this famous idea of the university. This results in a crisis situation that universally characterizes the university: it isn't capable of conceiving itself differently from this great 'liberal' conception and it can not exist in the way it was conceived. The real question, then, is to know whether the modern university will be able to transform itself. (1)

The characteristics of a university institution, in the sense it has been used in the last seven centuries, started in the middle ages but with roots back to the classical period of Greek and Roman civilizations. These characteristics remained fairly stable until the 18th century with objectives being restricted to the perpetuation and transmission of classic culture and the formation of professionals through the Liberal Arts, Theology, Law and Medicine.

In the 19th Century there was some initiative in the sense of amplifying and reformulating the objectives of the University and adjusting it to its surrounding reality. Science, and later on technology, started taking the place of philosophy and research the place of teaching.

From there, the Universities assumed the role of forming citizens and professionals, trying hard, however, to preserve the specific aspects that distinguished them from other institutions. The role they were to play constituted reason for debate and various thinkers dealt with the problem. Restricting ourselves to the most classic, we can cite Cardinal Newmann (The Idea of a University), Abraham Flexner (Universities: American, English, German), Ortega e Gasset (Misión de la Universidad), Whitehead (The Aims of Education) and Jasper (La Idea de la Universidad).

The University, as conceived by Newmann, is essentially a teaching institution aimed at helping the young to become men. Although no one in good conscience can disagree, in principle, with Newmann's ideas, problems do occur when trying to put them into practice. From the very beginning conflicts emerged between the roles of teaching and research, the so called exact sciences and humanities, academic and professional disciplines, pure and applied research, etc.

According to Flexner, a factor of university disintegration was the necessity of satisfying the expanding demands of the environment. The conflict generated by trying to conciliate two extremes --- preservation of the classic model and the implementation of a community service institution --- led the University to practically total dependence upon political momentum and the holders of power within the military-industrial complex.

The University, however, can only carry out its role as a center of research, reflection, and analysis of humanity's great problems when a satisfactory equilibrium between those two functions is achieved.

2. The Disintegration of the Community of Scholars:

Newmann's model is, as we have seen, impractical and many factors work against it. Indeed, universalism itself is opposed to modern nationalism with its barriers of language, religion, ideology, politics, books and ideas.

In the case of the Brazilian Universities, the difficulty of interchanging professors with foreign institutions, acquiring and subscribing to books and journals, and even the processes of hiring and transfering professors within the country's universities, is common knowledge.

To these problems we may add the growing variety of knowledge encompassed within a modern university and recent reforms which led to a disintegration within the community of scholars. They can be observed in two fundamental aspects;

1) at the professor level - the growing diversity of the fields of knowledge with a university has led to departmentalization and specialization with the consequence of isolating professors to the point of incapacitating communication and interaction among colleagues;
2) at the student level - due to socio-economic conditions, many students can not limit themselves exclusively to studying, and university reforms which abolished intact grouping, the "climate" that favored students in getting to know one another and exchange ideas, has practically disappeared.

Without creating a structure that favors interaction and even impedes the viability of student associations, we have, in effect, gotten farther and farther away from the idealized model of the serious educational thinkers. Gone are the times when university problems were solved with the participation of teaching and student bodies. Today, the university guidelines are dictated by burocrats who, in general, do not know the academic aspects of the subjects submitted for their judgement.

3. Growth and Burocratization

The growth that we refer to is generally done by "adding to" without following a previously established divisionary plan and by a constant process of "trial and error". Considering the problems already mentioned, it would not have been difficult for an intelligent spectator to have forseen the results that we now have: a domineering burocratic class and an ever expanding burocracy. The negative aspects of such a situation is obvious to all.

For example, in the case of evaluation of professors as well as students, the quantitative values dominate. Quantity rather than quality, competition rather than collaboration. Naturally, this situation is reflected in the professor's work. From a role that was once identified with the organization itself, the professor has now become an employee of a structure --- a structure which, from time to time, "judges" the professor's "effeciency" by purely quantitative burocratic principles. Because of such criteria we leave aside the traditional qualities asked of the professor such as teaching performance and relationships established with his students. Because of such criteria, the teaching activity, which if never most important was at least as important as research, gets to be considered a "load" which everyone tries to get rid of. Since it is obvious that not all can have this priviledge, one more symptom of of disintegration emerges in the faculty body. Those who can not get rid of such a "painful load" try hard to minimize the didatic tasks so that they have more free time for their papers, since they are the only factors that allow them to grow in the eyes of the academic community.

In all this chaos, the students are the eventual losers. The formation courses are slowly being emptied of a more profound content, which is left, naturally to the graduate courses which often then become glorified upper undergraduate level courses. And in Brazil,

as experienced with the American students of the 60's, we are finding ourselves faced with protests against the depersonalized relationships caused by the progressive burocratization of university life.

Finally, the administrators themselves have become victims of the monsters that they have created. Being forced, most ofthe time, to make decisions about academic matters of which they have less information about than those areas in which they have chosen to involve themselves, these administrators take the risk of soon seeing their authority "worn down" and losing, little by little, the ability to have a dialog with those they lead.

II EQUATING THE PROBLEM

1. The Problem of Ends

If, on one hand, it is essential for the university to constitute a center for scientific and technological investigation capable of assuring the autonomy of Brazilian industrial expansion, on the other hand it is essential that the university characterizes itself as a center for the integral formation of the young.

> ...if the university can not be the refuge of pure intellectuals divorced from practical reality, it can not be reduced to an agency that provides technicians...one must therefore take into consideration the legitimate cultural aspirations of the youth who try to position itself in a modern world and to understand the meaning of its historical momentum...(2).

As one can see, such problems place an imperative and immediate need for the serious study of Brazilian Universities in order that it is not simply constituded as an instrument for utilitarian and practical objectives or the simple professional preparation of youth.

For the university to be able to conciliate this function --- to train professionals in equilibrium with a humanistic formation --- it is necessary to neutralize the tension generated by the different characteristics of the ends and to obtain a harmony

between them. This may be accomplished through: a) awareness of such problems, and b) in depth studies about the nature of university teaching. A solution could be obtained by integration in the patterns of Mary Parker Follett in the sense of obtaining a consensus in order to establish an educational policy through which the university would try to involve and integrate the divergencies of all sections that constitute it. This integration could be accomplished through a continuous process of exchanging ideas between people (students, professors, administrators). It is important that each individual contributes with his specific share and, according to Follett (3), the resulting divergencies, once they are integrated, would nourish and enrich society. The university should organize itself in order to become a meeting place in which all who participate can keep relationships of an open, healthy, and constructive nature.

-There is, however, lack of educational and training programs capable of preparing "executives" with attitudes and knowledge compatible with the propositions suggested in the educational process. It is necessary that specialists from the various areas of the university get together with the experienced personnel of the central administration to form a group of technicians whose talents must be taken advantage of in an organic and integrated manner.

The administration is a means to achieve such objectives and should be integrated with the purpose of achieving the ends proposed by the organization. In an educational institution there must be a well defined philosophy that offers principles for action and norms for a common task.

All philosophical doctrine about education postulates a determined set of values upon which we must act. According to J. A. Aragão (4), an educational philosophy is in everyone's interest since it supplies the "why" of all educational work. If we base ourselves in a philosophy in which all members of the organization

are capable of assuming responsibilities and of contributing effectively to the organization's development, the problems of the administrator reduces itself to how to organize a school entity capable of reaching such goals. So we admit the possibility of a democratic form of administration, established at all levels and including faculty and students, which will necessarily assure an internal cohesion since it depends upon the significant participation of all the sections.

The improvement of the functioning process could only be obtained through the development of human resources directly involved, through the development of new methods, and through the improvement of the information production mechanisms that are necessary for the decision making processes. These guidelines should be clearly set forth as measures which would manifest themselves in the formulation of programs and projects.

It becomes extremely necessary then that we have a better understanding of the university organization. Data collection can contribute to the formation of the administrative picture and a more comprehensive understanding of the organizational realities. Through this information, those directly responsible for the functioning of the organization can propose new solutions for achieving a higher level of integration according to the patterns of Follett.

2. An Approach to the Problem of the Community of Scholars

When trying to overcome this situation caused by the disintegration of the community of scholars, the university should characterize itself as an integrated functional unit where everyone has specific and interdependent functions.

In the study of an organization, according to Follett's perspective, we notice the great emphasis she gives to integral units taken as mater cells of an organization. The establishment of such units must be done in such a way as to constitute itself

as a functional whole and not simply as an isolated set of activities. It is important to point out that these integral units are not only functions of their constituent parts, but of their mutual relations. It may be necessary to clarify how the term unit is used here, since its equivalent use in biology, psychology and philosophy is, as in organizational theory, the concept of coordination, understood as the structuring of a functional unit. In an organization characterized as integrated functional unit we presuppose that the administration builds work groups and integrates them obtaining as a result a conjunct action. This way the administration depends on the formation and sustainment of human relations, which should result from an effort of all elements involved to benefit the company they serve. On the other hand, a group action will be possible only through the participation of all members involved in an organization. This participation results from the reciprocal engagement in the elaboration, proposition and accomplishment of basic principles for the approach to a given situation.

Consider the observation of professor Darcy Ribeiro (5):

> The basic problem of Latin American universities consists in overcoming its compartmentalization into static units, through the implementation of a better integrated structure whose organs interact and complete each other in such a way so that they enable it to accomplish its functions by the conjunct action of all its units.

It is easy to see the need for a university's integrated structure. We find support in Follett's doctrine for a more positive university administration, without energy waste, since it states that a good administration should put in cooperation all elements in order to allow all of them to contribute to the enrichment of the process.

We infer from Follett's doctrine that when people organize themselves into groups and work together towards a given goal, each one has a function and a task to accomplish. The individual

responsability varies according to the function and from it authority arises. The person responsible for an organization must concern himself with structuring the individual and group responsabilities, making them more effective, based on the interchange of relations. This implies the understanding that responsability is not limited only to the accomplishment of an individual task since it is part of a functional unit. Then, for this concept of responsability to be present in an organization taken as a total entity, we presume an integration of several groups, and not only the simple isolated realization of individual tasks. The carrying out of responsability cannot result from administration by coercion. The individual can only be responsible for what he freely chooses.

We believe that the Departments, as foreseen in Law 5.540, being the smallest fraction of the university structure responsible for administrative, didatic, scientific and personnel distribution, should be the initial point for the characterization of the university proposed above. Because of their structure and objectives, we consider them as operational units responsible for the teaching, research and extension of all fields of knowledge. To reach this goal, they should aim at the coordination and integration of their components' functions. For this the head of the Department should embody the role of the executor of everyone's wishes, which would only be possible through the utilization of group principles, where everybody's participation results in the reciprocal agreement to elaborate, propose and accomplish the basic rules and principles established for the context. He must make possible the integration of all personal contributions, shown in the sharing brought about by conscientious, responsible options. This co-sharing is a hard task that demands patience and persistancy as in all learning, especially when this learning must begin with the overcoming of all traditionally institutionalized schemes.

When dealing specifically with departments, it is believed that all members, even those with responsibilities for specific functions, have organizational responsabilities as well. Therefore, in departments, no one should abdicate their responsibilities. But it is the department head, however, who has the authority and responsibility to act as coordinator.

The concept of coordination emerges as the principle problem of an organization. It must be the result of union through integration, of differenciated reactions, neither annialated nor absorbed, but integrated through relations of reciprocity. This final whole is not homogenized but, on the contrary, it is a more significant result than each of its component parts, showing an apparent paradox where one can state that the whole is more than the sum of the individual parts. Until recently we believed that the ideal whole had to be the results of either the imposition of conflicting points of view or of solutions or renouncements that affect people's integrity. To Follett (6) the differences must coalesce, appearing in the creatively found solution.

> Give your difference, welcome my difference, unify all difference in the larger whole --- such is the law of growth... Heterogeneity, not homogeneity, makes unity.

The <u>whole</u> of the departments, therefore, rises from diversity and is based upon cooperation and the raw material of coordination.

However, there are challenges that provoke answers in the community life of an organization. And one of the greatest sources of challenges are the institutionalized conflicts that occupy the "cross-eyed" optic of burocratic administrators which are considered as the biggest burden to those who direct functions. Follett turned conflict into a positive, constructive, and creative element.

According to her we need not counterpose conflicts but to confront them. In them she sees a source of enrichment of organizational situations, considering them not as disturbances of equilibrium but rather as channels that make interaction possible. The department head must be wise enough to know how to confront them in order to

integrate them. It is heterogenity that generates unity.

We believe that under this perspective the relations of the faculty and student body will be more effective since the students will have a more active voice in relation to the study programs themselves, course activities and evaluation. Similarly, his relations with the administrative sections will gain new dimensions since everyone will participate in the decision making processes related to all aspects that affect their work.

Only this way will we be able to reach the goal that generated the changes mandated by legislation, that is, to permit better adjustment to the general and specific objectives of the institution where the activities of each fraction of the university organization is inserted, thus allowing the university to be a functional work unit.

The notion of a functional work unit implies, therefore, a need to rationalize and reflect, to provoke a gradual change of mentality, encouraging awareness of the autonomy of each individual that freely and slowly begins to consider himself a differentiated integrant of a process.

To coordinate, then, is to change individual ideas into collective ideas; it is to implement the integration process, permanent and free of emotional barriers. We will never conciliate planning and individualism if we don't understand the latter to be a constituent of a whole and not simply a part. When refering to an organization we should never subordinate the good of a department to the good of an institution, because the point of view of a department is important to all. In other words, the departamental policies should be an integral part of a general policy.

3. The Problem of the Burocratic Complexity

The facts presented in item 3 are, evidently, consequences of the growing burocratic phase that afflicts our universities. We

believe, however, that even without breaking away with the present structures we can produce schemes that allow more flexibility to the present structures so as to permit them to play the role we want them to play.

Still considering the departments as the smallest university structure, according to Law 5.540 (article 30), even in this small nucleous the problems previously pointed out are already present and can be already equated in this level. This way, some departments have interdisciplinary subjects, as "Administrative Theory" just to cite an example. For the good development of a modern course in this specialty, pleas are made to areas previously considered disassociated with administration: economics, sociology, and methodology, become necessary to foundation of "Administrative Theory". So, already in a level that we will call internal, interdisciplinary activity makes itsel necessary. This process evolves to a type of collaboration which will be called external, which in some cases are administered as a collaboration of distinct department even though belonging to a same university.

In these two levels of collaboration we already verify the tendency to delineate the outline of a unit. With the wealth of knowledge accumulated along the years and the explosion of results we observe nowadays in all levels of knowledge, it is impossible for a university to approach them at an equal level of profundity. This way, due to economical, social and other matters, some "outlines" will naturally be privileged. Then, around the delineated "outlines" the courses and curriculums would be planned.

With the option we would have as a consequence the solution for the two problems we pointed out initially: a "natural" grouping on the part of students and professors in terms of commum interests would lead more and more to an integrated and productive activity. Evidently this "outline" would have a dynamic character depending on the group that defines it. Integrated and stimulated, professors and students would tend to extend this type of integration

to an inter-institute or inter-college level. This would depend upon the needs created by the group and not, as it happens today, imposed from above according to the wills of those who have the power at the time.

At first, one would naturally think of the multiple administrative problems that would arise from this proposition. We believe, however, that an administrative body could be formed based upon the departments and, from there, they gradually start to transact with the higher positions of the central administration. With administrators trained at the depeartment level and rising to higher levels of the university as their careers continue, these administrators would have a sensitivity to the problems of the smaller departmental unit and be able, therefore, to estaolish priorities and rational scales of work responsibilities.

In relation to what has been said above and the complexity of the problems which afflict the universities nowdays, we think it would be pretentious to propose a "model" of university administration. However, we believe it when we say that the administrative models which propitiate modernization and flexibility, characteristics that the university is lacking, are not too distant from the ideas proposed by Mary Parker Follett.

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